

W

C O P Y

Law Office of  
GEORGE R. FARNUM  
6 Beacon Street  
Boston, Mass.

May 22, 1939

Board of Trustees of the  
J. B. Thomas Hospital,  
Peabody,  
Massachusetts

Gentlemen:

Mr. John E. Sullivan has referred to me your communication of May 17th, notifying him, without explanatory comment of any sort, of his immediate suspension as Superintendent of the J. B. Thomas Hospital, "pending the findings of the investigation now being carried on."

Mr. Sullivan has been connected with the Hospital for approximately thirty years -- for over ten years as its Superintendent. It is certainly regrettable that, under the circumstances, you should have taken this abrupt action without affording Mr. Sullivan any explanation of your reasons or any opportunity to be heard in his own defense. It is likewise regrettable that, after his long service, you should have subjected him to the humiliation of immediately placing in charge of the Hospital, for the time being at least, a former subordinate whom he released for the good of the service -- an action on his part which was reviewed and approved by your predecessor trustees.

On Mr. Sullivan's behalf, I hereby respectfully request the following:

1. That he be promptly furnished with a detailed explanation of your reasons for his suspension.



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6 Beacon Street  
Boston, Mass.

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Fenway,  
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Board of Trustees

- 2 -

5/22/39

2. That he be apprised as to whether any complaints or charges have been filed against him and, if so, that he be informed as to who made them and be furnished with copies.

3. That he be granted a full and fair public hearing on the question of both his present suspension, and future removal if any such action is in contemplation; and that he shall be accorded the right to be represented by counsel.

Very truly yours,

(Signed ) GEORGE R. FARNUM

GRF-VEP

Sent by Special Delivery

1921  
H/1921



5/22/35

- 2 -

Board of Trustees

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(Signed) GEORGE H. FARNUM

CRS-VTP

Sent by Special Delivery

HOSPITAL

0005.124.103.4



May 23, 1939

To the Trustees of the  
J. B. Thomas Hospital  
Peabody, Mass.

Gentlemen:

The Citizens' Committee wishes to express its keen disappointment that the outcome of the first meeting of your new Board should have occasioned such poor publicity for the J. B. Thomas Hospital, an institution the reputation and future of which have been placed solely in your hands.

A hospital more than any other public institution, in order to survive, must have the confidence of the people from whom it draws its patients, and the confidence of the people in a hospital depends largely, if not entirely, upon the ability, discipline, and morale of its staff.

The entire responsibility for rebuilding the confidence of Peabody people in the J. B. Thomas Hospital was placed in your hands when you were elected as trustees. Yet, at your very first meeting, your actions have dropped the Hospital far lower in the estimation of the people than every before.

Your predecessors in office nearly two years ago, realizing the necessity for better discipline and supervision over the staff, brought in a man characterized by the Bingham Survey as a "nationally recognized authority" to act as surgical director of the Hospital. The Survey also states that due to this action of the former trustees "the surgical and medical phases are fast becoming equal to other hospitals of this size." It is, therefore, reasonable to assume that the former trustees in securing the services of Dr. Seth M. Fitchet took a step in the right direction.

The people of this city have a right to know what prompted your Board to abolish the position of surgical director without any apparent







investigation of the necessity of the position. Is it true that your Board received a letter from Dr. Fitchet recommending the suspension of three local physicians from the staff pending investigation by the District Attorney, the Board of Registration in Medicine, and the Committee on Ethics and Discipline of the Massachusetts Medical Society?

If so, are we to construe that the abolition of the position of Surgical Director, which amounted to the discharge of Dr. Fitchet, was resorted to in order to forestall further action on the recommendations contained in his letter?

As we see it, there are but two alternatives. Your Board can restore the confidence of the people of Peabody in the J. B. Thomas Hospital by an immediate and thorough investigation of the conduct of the Hospital in all its phases. We suggest that some professional organization such as the Massachusetts Medical Society or the American Medical Association would be the most competent to conduct such an investigation if their services can be obtained.

The second alternative must necessarily be closing the Hospital for an indefinite period, even though this involves the use of facilities outside the city. The second alternative would certainly be preferable to jeopardizing the lives, health and safety of our people through improper supervision.

The people of Peabody are looking forward to a frank and complete statement from your Board. They have a right to know whether you are going to permit the staff to run the Hospital for its <sup>own</sup> ~~men~~ benefit, or whether you~~s~~ are going to insist, through competent supervision, that the patients at the Hospital get the best of care and the attention of physicians and surgeons who are properly qualified to treat their particular ailments. We trust that the course you take will be for the benefit of the patients.

May we in addition remind you that unless your future actions restore fully the confidence of people in the J. B. Thomas Hospital, the



Investigation of the necessity of the position is at issue that your

board resolved a letter from Dr. Richard Thompson, the representative

of these local physicians from the local medical association, the

district attorney, the State of Michigan in Medicine, and the

Committee on Ethics and Legislation of the American Medical Society

in 1911, and as it appears that the position of the position of

Dr. Richard Thompson, which appeared in the discussion of Dr. Richard

Thompson is in order to furnish a further action in the recommendations

contained in his letter.

It was decided that the board also had the representatives. Your board can

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hospital by an immediate and immediate investigation of the position

of the hospital in all its phases. It appears that the position of

organization was on the recommendation of the American Medical Society

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investigation. It is that the board can be considered.

The board also has a responsibility in closing the hospital

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to be considered the board, health and safety of the hospital

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lack of paying patients will, in itself, place an unreasonable burden on the taxpayers to the extent of forcing the Hospital to close its doors.

Very truly yours,

CITIZENS' COMMITTEE

Per George R. Underwood

Chairman



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burden on the hospital to the extent of forcing the hospital to  
close its doors.

Very truly yours,

Chairman, Committee

Per George W. Underwood

Chairman

May 23, 1939

2005.124,103.5



July 12, 1940

Mr. Edward J. Dowd  
City Clerk, City Hall  
Peabody, Mass.

My dear Mr. Dowd:

The Board of Trustees of the J. B. Thomas Hospital  
would like to meet with the City Council on Monday evening,  
July 15, at 8:15 P.M. at the hospital.

Will you kindly notify each member to that effect.

Yours very truly,

Cornelius J. Kiley, M.D.  
Chairman, Board of Trustees  
J. B. Thomas Hospital, Peabody, Mass.



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City Clerk, City Hall  
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Chairman, Board of Trustees  
J. B. Thomas Hospital, Peabody, Mass.



To the People of the City of Peabody:

I feel that I should explain the reason why I <sup>did</sup> will-not attend the meeting held Monday, July 15th, at the J. B. Thomas Hospital. I have stated in the past that I believe that any financial condition pertaining ~~to~~ to the city of Peabody in any way should be discussed in the chambers of the City Council. The business of the J. B. Thomas Hospital is the business of the citizens of the City of Peabody. I will be ready at any time to meet in the council chambers the trustees of the J. B. Thomas Hospital to discuss any financial matters pertaining to the Hospital. As I have said in the past, I definitely will not vote to appropriate money to the Hospital until such time that there is an outsider elected who is ~~qual~~ified to become superintendent of the hospital and also a chief of staff who is not practising in the City of ~~He~~ Peabody.

Ralph L. Blake.



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Ralph L. Blake



More than 16,257,000 patients were admitted to hospitals in the United States last year. That is over twelve per-cent of the population, or about one person out of every eight.

In 1935 there were less than 8,000,000 admitted to our hospitals. We have had therefore more than 100% increase in hospitalization during the last ten years, an average yearly increase of about 8,000,000 patients.

An increase of such magnitude is hard to explain and perhaps there are many contributing causes. The fact that hospital admissions increased over 5,000,000 during the war years -nearly three million in 1943- suggests the possibility that higher wages and greater employment made it possible for many needing medical care to secure it. It also poses the question as to how many need care in the lean years and fail to get it due to lack of funds.

The Blue Cross has been a growing blessing in recent years for those members who have had occasion to enter hospitals as patients. Also it has meant greater peace of mind and a feeling of security for those who had the coverage but not the necessity to use it.

But sickness and disability incur more than hospital costs, for there are doctors and often private duty nurses to be paid for. When the wage earner in the family is the one hospitalized it generally means that the family income stops and that the household must somehow live and meet the financial burden.

As a hospital supt. for over twenty years I have frequently been appalled at the financial disaster which befalls so many family's who have had sickness.

Mr. Hart was a man of sixty-five and had just been retired on a pension. He and his wife had a comfortable, tho not elaborate, home; it was not mortgaged. There was one daughter and she was married. The Harts could face the future unafraid, for they had security.

They were very happy together for three months until Mrs. Hart complained of headaches and other vague complaints. A doctor was called and



one in 10,000 patients were admitted to hospitals in the United States last year. That is over twelve per cent of the population or about one person out of every eight.

There were less than 2,000,000 admitted to our hospitals.

There were more than 100,000 increases in hospitalization during the

last ten years. An average yearly increase of about 8,000,000 patients.

An increase of such magnitude is hard to explain and perhaps there

are many reasons for it. One is that hospital admissions increased

over 7,000,000 during the war years - nearly three million in 1945 - because

the possibility that a man might be injured in the war made it possible

for many medical needs to be met. It also forced the question as

to how many more care in the lean years and fail to get it due to lack of

funds.

The fact that there has been a growing feeling in recent years for those

who have had occasion to enter hospitals as patients. Also it has

been a greater sense of mind and a feeling of security for those who had

the power to and not the necessity to use it.

It is also true that the hospital care for those

who do not enter private hospitals is not as good as it was.

There is the fact that the hospitalized is generally means that the

family income stops and that the hospital must somehow live and meet the

financial burden.

In a hospital eight or ten years I have frequently been asked

if the financial situation of the hospital is so bad that it has had

to close.

There are many hospitals that have had to close on a permanent

basis and it is a terrible thing to see a hospital that has not

been able to meet its obligations. It is a terrible thing to see the

hospital that has been closed.

There are many hospitals that have been closed and it is a

terrible thing to see a hospital that has been closed.



after an examination assured her there was nothing to worry about. Her blood was up a bit, but nothing to be disturbed about. "Just get your glasses changed and you'll be as good as new". That was his advise.

But the glasses didn't solve the problem for the headaches and other symptoms grew progressively worse. Then two weeks in the hospital gave her a good rest and she was assured that now she would show improvement. But she didn't.

There followed months of buying costly prescriptions, mostly glandular products, and they were very expensive. For weeks and months now the doctor was a daily visitor.

After two years and four stays in the hospital it was discovered that the patient had a brain tumor and an immediate operation would be necessary. The operation cost a lot of money. Not only for the hospital and doctors, but for private duty nurses for they were needed for the first few weeks.

Mrs. Hart lingered for months and needed care of both doctors and nurses to the last. By this time the home was gone and there was very little left. In the meantime the married daughters husband had required an operation and having no money Mr. Hart-it being a life and death case-paid the bill. Then there was nothing left.

Mrs. M- was the wife of a man who worked as a laborer at a nearby factory. She was 45 yrs old and had three children, the oldest a boy of sixteen. These folks lived very frugally. They owned no car and had no property but had saved some fifteen hundred dollars, including war bonds. That was their nest egg to tide them over any emergency.

This woman complained of feeling poorly and had lost a lot of weight. The doctor had xrays taken at the hospital and it was decided that she had cancer of the stomach.

The doctor talked at length with the husband. He told him frankly that the prospects were not good, but that her only chance was an immediate operation. Everything had to be planned of course and the doctor learned how much salary the man earned weekly, how much money in the bank and etc.



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left. The money for the private duty nurses had been used in an operation and having no money left, Hart's being a life and death battle was still.

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Mrs. Hart's wife of whom she was as a doctor's wife.

Factory, she was 42 years old and had three children, the eldest a boy of sixteen. These three lived very frugally. They had no car and no property but

had never more fifteen hundred dollars, including war bonds. That was their

total for the time and over the years.

The doctor, who was at the hospital and it was decided that she

should be kept there.

The doctor's wife, who was a doctor's wife, was in the hospital and

the doctor's wife was not well, and the doctor's wife was not well.



"If your wife gets the best possible care," the doctor remarked, "~~every-~~  
~~thing-must-be-in-her-favor.~~" she has a chance; but she will have to have a pri-  
vate room and private nurses night and day for the first week or ten days".

A housekeeper in her absense was also an necessity and housekeepers have to get wages too.

The patient left the hospital after two weeks but the housekeeper had to continue until she got her strength back. The two weeks at the hospital and the xrays and blood transfusions ,plus tha private duty nurses and doctors r bills used up a little better than one thousanddollors of theur fifteen hun-  
dred savings.

A few weeks later this womah tried to get along without the house-  
keeperr but she didn't seem to have the strength and the housekeeper came back. Three months later she was rushed back to the hospital for an other operation. Strangulation of the intestines had occured.

She seemed to be rallying from the second operation, so the doctor said but the disease had gone all thru her system, and it was only a matter of time. Then he told the husband that his wife would have to have nursing care as long as she lived. She ought to be ina hospital.

The husband was able to pay the doctors fees, but only because they had been reduced fifty % for the second operation. Now his money was gone. The doctor had located a hospital for the chronically (charitable) ill at \$15 per week but it was fifteen miles from hao me and they couldn't be to  
gether very often during the last few days of her life.

He was spared this tho as she had a sinking speela nd died.

Mr. J.L. was a man of sixty -two married and with two children. One a nineteen year old boy was in the army, a daughter of sixteen was in high scho  
school.

This patient had told the doctor that he had frequent grumbling pains in the region of his stomach and sometimes he couldn't breathe good. He was a  
advised to take two months off and get rested. He had been working quite hard

After six weeks he should of been rested ,perhaps he was, but he had a  
very severe attac.



"I have the best, capable nurse, the doctor's wife, every-  
thing--she--she--she--she has a child; but she will have to have a pri-  
vate room and give to nurses night and day for the first week or two days."  
The housekeeper is her assistant was also in technical and housekeeping  
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the nurse and doctor's wife, the patient's only nurse and doctor's  
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time. The doctor told the patient that if she would have to have nursing care  
as long as she lived, she must be in the hospital.

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return very often during the last few days of her life.

The doctor said this was the last thing she could do.  
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was the diagnosis. This man had asthma for years and was considered a poor

surgical risk.



In 1935 there were nearly 8,000,000 patients admitted to the hospitals in United States. Medical authorities were aware that this was a record high in hospital admissions and many charged it up to the hardship and suffering which were the result of the depression.

In 1945 however there were more than 16,257,000 patients admitted to our hospitals. That is over 12% of our population or about one person in every eight. It represents an increase of over 100 % in the ten years from 1935 to 1945.

There is no way of knowing how many millions were confined in their homes by sickness, some of them for long periods of time. Nor do these figures include the two-hundred thousand mothers who give birth to their offspring each year in the United States without medical aid of any kind; Or the estimated 8,000,000 patients in the country, needing, but not getting psychiatric care.

An increase of over 8,257,000 hospital admissions in ten years is startling to say the least, and poses the question -why?







August 28, 1944

Dr. Cornelius J. Kiley  
12 Chestnut Street  
Peabody, Massachusetts

Trustees of the  
J.B. Thomas Hospital  
Peabody, Massachusetts

Dear Doctor:

I am addressing you as Chairman of the Trustees of the J.B. Thomas Hospital and request that you take such matters up with the other members of the Board for immediate action.

The J.B. Thomas Hospital is a Department of the City of Peabody, Massachusetts. Under the laws and the charter of the City of Peabody all legal matters of every form and nature are required to be handled by the City Solicitor.

You, your Board or any other Department has no right to employ, such as you are employing, any other Counsel or to seek any other legal advice in relation to your Department except from, by and through the City Solicitor of this City.

As a citizen of this City, I demand that any and all money paid to any lawyer or lawyers in the form of fees in any form, whether it be a lump sum and or in the form of commission for the collection of debts, be immediately returned to the City Treasury.

The manner in which the debts owed the City of Peabody by patients who have received treatment, services and board at our Institution is scandalous and used for the purpose of demonstrating a false power by an instrument who believes that he has the right to direct the destinies of this City and particularly in relation to your Department.

No individual, Body or Board in this City has the right to waive any condition in the law to promote the self profit of any demagogue.







Page 2.

I shall hold you personally responsible for the fulfillment of this demand which I shall expect you to take action upon forthwith.

I trust that I may have the cooperation of you and the members of your Board but if it is required, I shall take such legal steps as are necessary to see to it that your Board conducts it's affairs as required under the law.

Faithfully yours,

The M. B. Paige Company

By

Jere Quirk

Managing Director



I shall await your personally responsible for the fulfillment  
of this demand which I shall expect you to take action upon forth-

with. I am sure that I shall have the cooperation of you and the members  
of your board and it is requested that you will take such action  
as may be necessary to see to it that your board is organized in a  
manner which is satisfactory.

Very truly yours,

Wm. C. Calkins

Wm. C. Calkins

Wm. C. Calkins



Peabody, Massachusetts

February 4, 1957

Board of Trustees  
Josiah B. Thomas Hospital  
Peabody, Massachusetts

Gentlemen:

I would like to bring to your attention at this time, the seriousness of the overcrowded condition here at the J. B. Thomas Hospital. If something is not planned in the immediate future, we are not only endangering our accreditation, for which we worked so hard, but we are also endangering our own position of continuing to receive from the State our license to operate.

Going over the past history of the hospital, I would like to bring to your attention the fact that the 2nd Floor Chadwick Wing, consisting of eighteen private rooms was added in 1932, giving the hospital a total bed capacity of 54 beds. However, twelve of these beds, including four private rooms were used exclusively for Maternity cases and could not be used for Medical or Surgical cases. This was the bed status of the hospital when I took over the office of Superintendent in January, 1947, and the following figures will give you a summarization of the increases which we have had to contend with since January, 1947. There has been a steady and proportional increase over this ten-year span.

	<u>1947</u>	<u>1956</u>
Number of Patients	2,291	3,105
Number of Patient Days	19,861	25,126
City Appropriation	\$33,000	\$40,000
Bal. 1946	4,436	
Average No. Patients in Hosn. per day (Including Newborn)	54.7	69
Maximum Number of Patients on any one day	71	89
Minimum Number of Patients on any one day	36	37
Number of Laboratory tests	7850	27258
Number of X-Rays taken	1694	4649
Operating Expense	\$188,000	\$537,600







This increase could only be taken care of by overcrowding our facilities.

First it was a matter of increasing our wards from seven to twelve beds, Children's Ward from five to eight beds and cribs, Industrial Ward from four to six beds, Cubicle from three to four beds, giving us 48 beds on the first floor, an increase of sixteen beds on the first floor.

On the Second Floor, it was necessary to take away the four private rooms from Maternity, giving us eighteen private rooms for medical and surgical cases, and reducing beds for Maternity cases to eight. However, in the past year it was necessary to take another private room and convert it into two bathrooms. Up until three years ago, we had a beautiful Solarium where patients could sit out during their convalescent period. This has now been taken away from the patients and as many as six beds are out there most of the time.

I, therefore, wish to summarize my chief complaints:

1. Overcrowded conditions to such an extent that at times we have no more than four private rooms in the hospital.
2. Inadequate Toilet facilities
3. Inadequate Space for Laboratory
4. X-Ray equipment is fourteen years old and is a model that was developed twenty-five years ago. There are no dressing rooms or Toilet facilities for X-Ray patients. The X-Ray machine is continuously breaking down and there is a remote danger to the patient. We are doing our best to keep it in first class condition, but at a tremendous expense.
5. Our one elevator is at least twenty years old, is overworked, constantly breaking down and inadequate for the service it should render. Disposables should never be carried in the same elevator with patients or food.
6. Office space for the administration of the hospital is inadequate. So much so that a patient being admitted, or one of his or her relatives, have no privacy in giving a personal history, because they have to stand in the corridor where at times a number of visitors are standing around listening.
7. The Medical Staff Room and Meeting Room for the Trustees has been taken away from them. It was necessary to convert this room into a Medical Record Room in order to comply with the Joint Commission of Accreditation. However, it is necessary that the Medical Staff have at least four meetings a month, and in order to attain this, it is necessary that I turn my office over to the Staff for these particular meetings.







In conclusion, we must all realize that the Hospital is going into its fiftieth year of operation. Medicine and Hospitalization has vastly improved and though we have tried to keep up with these improvements, and, I believe, have been successful in this endeavor, we must look ahead and foresee the medical needs of the future and whereas the recommendation of both the Federal Government and the State is four and one half beds to the thousand in proportion, you can readily see how inadequate we are, not only for future needs, but for our present needs.

Submitted to you this fourth day of February, 1957,

Thomas M. Connolly  
Superintendent



